

II. EXISTING CONDITIONS – PLANS, POLICIES & PEOPLE

A. Relevant Plans & Policies

1. Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (1996-2001)

The New Mexico Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, S.C.O.R.P., (1996-2001) was made possible through the Land and Water Conservation Fund (L.W.C.F.). This Plan serves as a major policy and plan guidance document for recreation providers state-wide. Prepared by the State of New Mexico Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources Department, the S.C.O.R.P aids in the coordination of outdoor recreation opportunities. It is intended to provide the framework through which many recreation challenges will be addressed.

Since its inception in 1965, the L.W.C.F. has protected some of America's most recognized and treasured national parks, wilderness, wetlands, forests, and refuges. Equally important, L.W.C.F. has been responsible for thousands of parks and recreation areas nationwide. Over the past 30 years, approximately \$33 million has been provided to local political jurisdictions, through the state of New Mexico, on a 50/50 matching basis. The matching grants provide funds to states for planning, developing, and acquiring land and water areas for state and local parks and recreation areas. Bernalillo County has been the recipient of approximately \$1.1 million in L.W.C.F. grants administered through the State Parks Division of the Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources Department. Projects in Bernalillo County that have received L.W.C.F. funding include:

- ◆ Raymond G. Sanchez Community Center, Park & Pool
- ◆ Atrisco Park & Little League
- ◆ La Ladera Park
- ◆ Los Vecinos Park & Community Center
- ◆ Paradise Hills Community Center & Pool
- ◆ Raymac Park
- ◆ Tom Tenorio Park

To be eligible for matching grants, every state must prepare and regularly update a S.C.O.R.P. These plans include inventories or assessments of current recreation resources (local, state, and federal) within a state, identify needs and new opportunities for recreation improvements, and set forth a five-year action agenda to meet the goals identified by citizens and elected leaders.

Through extensive public participation, the S.C.O.R.P. identified six critical issues for outdoor recreation in New Mexico that are relevant to this Master Plan; these issues are presented in Table II-1.

Table II-1 SCORP Critical Issues & Relevance to Master Plan

<i>S.C.O.R.P. Critical Issues</i>	<i>Relevance to Bernalillo County Parks and Recreation Parks, Open Space, and Trails Master Plan</i>
1. Balancing Use with Conservation of Natural Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Acquisition of Open Space property bought specifically to preserve sensitive natural features
2. Increased Inter-agency Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Working with other agencies such as U.S. Fish & Wildlife, Army Corps of Engineers, State Parks Division, Trust for Public Lands and City of Albuquerque Open Space Division for the purchase and development of County Open Space. ◆ Joint Powers Agreement with APS for the management of playing fields; encroachment licenses with AMAFCA for recreation facility development ◆ Joint Powers Agreement with City of Albuquerque Parks & Recreation Department on facility development, as necessary
3. Need for Alternative Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ 1998 & 2000 Open Space Mill Levy; possible extension in 2006 ◆ Revenue-generating programs at Mesa del Sol ◆ Tapping into federal & local grant monies for the purchase of Open Space ◆ User-fees for Adult Softball League for facility maintenance and program administration
4. Need for Quality Management /Quality Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Staffing ◆ Compliance with mission statement ◆ Efficient project management and planning
5. Staying Ahead of User Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Public Focus Groups to identify needs ◆ Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Process ◆ Systematic maintenance of facility inventory, user origins, and facility locations using Geographic Information Systems
6. Upgrading and Maintaining Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Adequate maintenance staffing and budgets ◆ True level of service goes beyond initial capital expenses

The University of New Mexico (UNM) Community and Regional Planning Program is updating the S.C.O.R.P. The revision is expected to be completed by early 2004.

2. Planned Growth Strategy

In 1998, the City of Albuquerque and Bernalillo County began a joint effort to develop a comprehensive and integrated growth management program for the urban area of Bernalillo County. This work culminated in a two-part Planned Growth Strategy (PGS) Report that was completed in the Fall of 2001. The Planned Growth Strategy study area focuses on the City of Albuquerque and the portion of the County of Bernalillo "which is adjacent to the City and in which urban intensity development can take place." The PGS was not intended "to be a growth management program for the entire County of Bernalillo," such as for the East Mountain area. Therefore, most of the work in the study focused on the geographic area between the Rio Puerco on the west, the Forest Service lands on the east, and the Bernalillo County limits on the north and south.

Part 1 consists of the Findings Report, which examines the environmental, economic, social, and fiscal consequences of growth and development in the metropolitan area. It concluded that the Albuquerque area faces challenges related to deteriorated infrastructure; natural resource conservation and preservation related to land, water, and air quality; traffic congestion; timely provision of infrastructure, parks, schools and other facilities to support new development; and the decline of some older neighborhoods.

Part 2 addresses the Preferred Alternative for the form and timing of growth of the metropolitan area. It also provides some approaches to implement the PGS and suggests how to configure infrastructure planning and regulatory approval to encourage development in the pattern suggested by the Preferred Alternative.

The County Commission has not taken a formal position on the Planned Growth Strategy.

3. Adopted Plans: Rank I, II, and III

There are three levels of adopted plans: Rank I, II and III. Prior to adoption by the governing body, a plan is assigned a rank to ensure it is consistent with plans of higher rank. Adopted plans are ranked according to their relationship to the Albuquerque / Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan, a Rank I plan. The Bernalillo County P.O.S.T Master Plan is a Rank II plan.

Adopted plans for development and conservation are ranked. Lower ranking plans should be consistent with higher ranking plans and should identify how they relate to these relevant, higher ranking plans. There are three levels of adopted plans:

Rank I Plan

The Albuquerque / Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan is the basic long-range city policy for the development and conservation of the entire metropolitan area.

Rank II Plans

Facility Plans are specialized in subject matter; they normally cover only one type of natural resource utility or public facility, such as water or parks. Such plans cover the entire metropolitan area or city, or at least a major part thereof. These plans specify important development standards general site locations, and multi-year programs of facility capital improvements.

Area Plans each cover diverse, major geographic parts of the metropolitan area, typically 15 or more square miles, and specify important development standards. Sites of key land use, utility, and public facility development are usually indicated.

Rank III Plans

Sector Development Plans cover an area with common characteristics, typically one square mile or more but occasionally considerably smaller; such an area may be called a neighborhood. These plans, which are defined by the Zoning Code, create special zoning regulations for the area covered and may also specify other fairly detailed development parameters.

Neighborhood Development Plans are similar in scope to sector development plans except these plans do not set special zoning regulations. They may, however, propose rezoning.

**a) Albuquerque/Bernalillo County
Comprehensive Plan (Rank I)**

In addition to providing guidelines for land use, environmental and resource management, the Albuquerque / Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan identifies potential Open Spaces in Bernalillo County, outlines criteria for new park and Open Space facilities and emphasizes the need to link Parks, Open Space and Trails throughout the County. Parks and other developed recreational facilities, as well as the P.O.S.T. concept, are emphasized for the quality-of-life aspects they offer to the public. All Open Space and park properties fall under the guidelines promulgated in the Comprehensive Plan.

The 1975 adoption of the Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan formally established the City of Albuquerque's Major Public Open Space (M.P.O.S.) Program. The 1988 Comprehensive Plan update reinforces the role and importance of Open Space. The Comprehensive Plan identifies lands that could surround urban Albuquerque with public land and also provide pockets of Open Space throughout Bernalillo County to help preserve the rural form of the valley, mesa, and foothills. Although the City and County each acquire and manage Open Space properties separately, the M.P.O.S. network is part of a larger system of public Open Spaces, trails and parks managed by City, County, State and Federal agencies. Bernalillo County is committed to on-going coordination and collaboration with these departments and agencies to ensure a well-developed and well-maintained network.

The Comprehensive Plan establishes the concept of M.P.O.S. to provide:

- ◆ Conservation of natural resources and environmental features
- ◆ Provision of opportunities for outdoor education and recreation
- ◆ Conservation of archaeological resources
- ◆ Provision of trail corridors
- ◆ Protection of the public from natural hazards

The City of Albuquerque instituted a voter-approved ¼ cent tax in 1997 as a means to implement the Comprehensive Plan's call for Open Space acquisition.

Open Space Acquisition

The Comprehensive Plan directs future Open Space acquisition and provides general direction for Open Space uses. It identifies several areas for Open Space acquisition, which provide long term direction for County acquisition plans. Areas identified for acquisition by the City and County are the volcanoes, key portions of the basalt flow, and the escarpment. The Sandia Foothills where slopes exceed 10% are also identified. The Escarpment Plan and the Sandia Foothills Area Plan guide development in these areas.

The Comprehensive Plan identifies other properties for Open Space acquisition, which should be considered for nomination to the Bernalillo County Open Space Advisory Committee (BCOSAC) for formal evaluation and then subsequent recommendation to the County Commission. Only the County Commission is authorized to approve Open Space property purchases.

Open Space Funding

The Comprehensive Plan suggests the investigation of an Open Space dedication ordinance or new revenue sources such as real estate transfer or building permit fees. The County could consider these alternatives to supplement property tax mill levy funding, approved by voters in 1998 and again in 2000, and institute long term funding mechanisms. A new Open Space dedication ordinance could promote the creation of both public Open Space and private open space.

The New Mexico Attorney General ruled that counties may purchase and hold conservation easements. This ruling offers the County another tool for acquisition and potential funding sources (Opinion No. 01-02). Colorado, Pennsylvania and Washington are three states that use conservation easements as a method for conservation of natural areas and agricultural land. The potential for using conservation easements in Bernalillo County is addressed in greater detail in Chapter III.

Land Use & Trails

The Comprehensive Plan provides policy that targets the compatibility of recreational uses on Open Space areas and adjacent lands and addresses the development of a trail network.

Policies that affect Open Space planning are the multi-functional use of resources and compatible facilities (Policy j page 48), which impact all Open Space properties in the planning and management phases. Policies affecting trails include the establishment of a trail corridor along arroyos and appropriate ditches (Policy f page 46). Pajarito, Durand, Hubbell, Atrisco and Bachechi Open Space properties all benefit from this policy. A handful of parks and community complexes also benefit from this policy.

This policy also suggests the development of partnerships with the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District (MRGCD) for acequia easements, coordination with adjacent property owners, and co-locating park and Open Space facilities to maximize public use and cost savings. The Atrisco property can illustrate this concept with multiple uses – it is being master-planned for neighborhood park, Open Space, and little league field uses. The Comprehensive Plan also encourages the separation of motorized recreational vehicles from trail network, and collaboration with the private sector to establish suitable motorized vehicle recreation areas.

Bosque and Rio Grande Access

The Comprehensive Plan addresses access to the bosque and Rio Grande with general design and policy guidelines. The Rio Grande Valley State Park Management Plan, or Bosque Action Plan, should be used to guide access plans and management. River crossings should be sensitive to the bosque's natural environment, river functions, and valley land uses. Furthermore, adjacent lands to the river should be protected by compatible uses, and Open Space should provide links to the river and bosque. These policies

The Comprehensive Plan policy which calls for establishing trail corridors along appropriate ditches is applicable at the Pajarito, Durand, Hubbell, Atrisco & Bachechi Open Space properties and a handful of parks and community complexes.

apply specifically to the Durand and Atrisco Open Space properties and to Rio Bravo Park.

Rural Areas

The Comprehensive Plan affects the County's agricultural properties - Pajarito, Durand, Hubbell and Bachechi. The goal for Rural Areas is "to maintain the separate identity of rural areas as alternatives to urbanization by guiding development compatible with their open character, natural resources, and traditional settlement patterns. Policy d (page 55) further explains that agricultural land should remain in agricultural production:

Land which is suitable for agriculture shall be maintained to the extent feasible in agricultural production and discouraged from non-agricultural development.

Compliance with this policy would require these properties to retain an agricultural component mixed with community goals and sensitivity to bosque and wildlife resources. Other measures are suggested to support agriculture in rural areas, such as supporting cooperative-type farmers markets and investigating voluntary preservation of agricultural land and associated uses. With funding and legislation in place, the County could utilize transfer and purchase of development rights and conservation easement programs to encourage voluntary preservation of farmland.

Archaeological Resources

The Comprehensive Plan goal is to identify and manage or acquire significant archaeological and paleontological sites for research, education, economic and/or recreation use.

This section relates directly to Hubbell, Carlito Springs, Sabino Canyon, Ojito de San Antonio, and nominated properties such as the Selva site. The section on policies generally informs the treatment of properties with archaeological resources. These policies promote public understanding and

appreciation for the area's archaeological and paleontological past by forming partnerships with the Albuquerque Museum and other educational institutions for information sharing and student education. These partnerships may provide needed assistance for program development at Hubbell and Carlito Springs.

Private (on-site) open space

This section includes several policies (Policies f, g, h, and j, pages 46-48) which encourage the provision of varying-scale parkland and open space areas, development of trail linkages between private on-site and public Open Space, and encouragement of cluster housing and private open space areas.

Suggested mechanisms for achieving policy goals include continued dedications through zoning and subdivision dedications. Overall, this section provides direction and suggested incentives for the integration of private open space into the development process. Sedillo Ridge (Loma Ponderosa) is affected by these policies since it has a mix of purchased public Open Space and smaller pockets of on-site open space that are integrated into the proposed subdivision and are to be donated when final platting occurs.

Water Management

The goal is efficient water management and use, and policies in this section apply to all park and Open Space properties that require irrigation. These policies encourage efficient water use through landscape and irrigation design, drought tolerant native plant selection, conservation, and recycling of water. These policies also affect future development of park and Open Space properties, and the quality of irrigation systems on all properties. Policies also include the promotion of maximum absorption of precipitation and the protection of existing water rights and acquisition of new rights if needed. Protection and clarification of Open Space property water rights is a priority within Bernalillo County and actions are being taken to address water rights

ownership on several properties. The next section in this chapter addresses water issues in greater detail.

b) Major Public Open Space Facility Plan (Rank II)

The Albuquerque City Council and the Bernalillo County Commission approved the Major Public Open Space Facility Plan on December 14, 1998 and on January 26, 1999, respectively. The M.P.O.S. Plan governs all existing and future County Open Space properties.

This Rank II plan establishes guidelines for implementing M.P.O.S. Network goals contained in the Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan. Guidelines include policies for planning, land use decisions, management, and acquisition of M.P.O.S. land to strengthen the P.O.S.T concept. The M.P.O.S. Network provides visual relief from urbanization and offers opportunities for education, recreation, cultural activities, and conservation of natural resources. This plan informs property use and design decisions for all Bernalillo County Open Space properties. Relevant sections of the M.P.O.S. Plan are summarized below.

The M.P.O.S. Plan defines seven types of Major Public Open Space based on natural and cultural resources and use characteristics. A matrix is presented that provides details on the relationships between these seven types of M.P.O.S. and their Open Space purpose and associated uses. The section on Open Space within Chapter III of this plan identifies how each County Open Space property fits within one or more of these seven types.

Acquisition

The M.P.O.S. Plan describes the City Open Space Division's and City Open Space Advisory Board's role and function in evaluating and recommending properties for Open Space acquisition. A 2000 Bernalillo County Commission resolution created the Bernalillo County Open Space Advisory Committee (BCOSAC). The M.P.O.S. Plan states that "the

Bernalillo County staff is responsible for acquisition of Major Public Open Space by the County". For this reason, the BCOSAC has established a separate set of nomination and evaluation criteria for acquisition. These procedures are detailed in Chapter III of this plan. The M.P.O.S. Plan includes several policies that apply criteria to potential properties, which Bernalillo County also follows. These policies are listed on pages 31-32 of that plan.

Planning and Management

The M.P.O.S. Plan policies require varying levels of planning depending on the type of property. Properties will either be managed according to a Resource Management Plan, Master Development Plan, and/or a Site Plan and Vegetation Management Plan. The policies give a brief overview of each type of plan. All Bernalillo County properties will undertake one or more of these planning efforts. The collection of baseline information for each property will create a strong foundation for beginning the initial planning process.

Policy A.2.G refers to public participation in the planning process, and requires public meetings to be held at points of initial scoping, draft report, and final report of resource management planning. This policy also details notification procedures for public meetings.

The M.P.O.S. Plan includes sections that briefly describe City Open Space properties in major geographic areas, including the East Mountains. Section Seven relates directly to East Mountain properties, describing the overarching policies and common boundaries that Bernalillo County and the City share. Open Space properties owned by the County in the East Mountains should be added to the inventory of East Mountain Open Space and should follow the same policies outlined therein. These policies govern land use, management, and revenue potential. Policy D.5 encourages multi-agency cooperation, which can provide strengthened

Policy D.5 is being implemented with a multi-agency planning effort for Open Space properties in the East Mountains owned by Bernalillo County. The County applied for and received a technical assistance grant from the National Park Service Rivers and Trail Program to initiate the planning process for these properties. The Cibola National Forest/Sandia Ranger District also is a partner. More detail is presented in Chapter III of this plan.

resources for the development of East Mountain Open Space Properties:

The City shall investigate opportunities for trail linkages, joint management, and/or funding of East Mountain Major Public Open Space facilities with the U.S. Forest Service, Bernalillo County, and other agencies which provide environmental education.

c) Bosque Action Plan (Rank II)

The Bernalillo County Commission and Albuquerque City Council approved the Bosque Action Plan (B.A.P.) in 1993. It provides a blueprint for specific environmental and recreational improvements for the Rio Grande Valley State Park. The Plan policies are intended to minimize impacts on the bosque and help ensure the continued survival of bosque plant and animal habitat.

The B.A.P. will determine how adjacent County Open Space properties provide access to Rio Grande Valley State Park. The Bachechi, Durand, and Atrisco Open Space are the existing properties affected by the Bosque Action Plan.

County collaboration with the City Open Space Division will help implement B.A.P. goals and policies. The Plan contains several detailed maps for existing bosque access points. The Plan may require amendments to include additional bosque access points in the South Valley. The B.A.P. should be consulted in conjunction with the City Open Space Division for future bosque access plans from County properties.

The 2002 New Mexico Legislative session supported federal efforts to restore the bosque to its natural habitat. Senate Bill 135 appropriated funding for a bosque revitalization project, in cooperation with U.S. Senator Pete Domenici's initiative with the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District, to remove unnecessary jetty jacks and non-native trees to create habitat and recreational opportunities in the bosque between the

North and South Diversion Channels. This project began in the summer of 2002 and will continue for several years. County Parks and Recreation Department staff are involved in this planning effort with the Corps of Engineers, Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District, and other federal, state, local, tribal, and non-government entities with a stake in the bosque and the Rio Grande. County properties affecting and affected by Senator Domenici's initiative are the Atrisco and Durand properties.

d) North Valley Area Plan (Rank II)

The Bernalillo County Commission and Albuquerque City Council adopted the North Valley Area Plan (N.V.A.P.) in 1993. The N.V.A.P. provides guidance for area planning and development. The plan encompasses 28.5 square miles bounded by Bernalillo County/Sandoval County boundary (north); Interstate 40 (south); Interstate 25 (east); and the Rio Grande (west). The Bachechi Open Space, Raymond G. Sanchez Community Center, Alameda Soccer Fields, Nativity Ballfields/Alameda Little League, and La Ladera Park are the existing facilities within the N.V.A.P. boundaries.

The N.V.A.P. does not identify specific parcels of land for park or Open Space acquisition, but it does identify land adjacent to the bosque as appropriate for protection through acquisition, design principles, and overlay zoning. The N.V.A.P. comments on trail network development, and creation of incentives for private open space and the promotion of local agriculture. The following is a summary of how the N.V.A.P. affects the County Open Space properties.

Goals and Issues

N.V.A.P. goals which relate to Open Space include: create incentives to preserve farmland and open space, maintain ditches and acequias for agricultural and low-impact recreational purposes, and incorporate the Rio Grande and bosque into North Valley Area planning processes. Goals also promote the designation and preservation of historic and archeological sites.

N.V.A.P. Policies and Recommendations

Plan policies relate to Open Space in many different ways. Trail planning is impacted by N.V.A.P. transportation policies, which direct the County to work with the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District (M.R.G.C.D.) for ditch closure notification, and collaboration on a multiple use study for ditches and associated right-of-way.

The Housing policies require the County to “adopt standards for homeowner associations, including provisions that would enable the City or County to bill the association for maintenance costs if necessary and requirements for open space in perpetuity.” (page 15). This policy provides an incentive for establishment of private open space and future maintenance plans. The N.V.A.P. also discusses cluster housing and resulting private common open space. The plan concludes with policies that promote cluster housing, which will also promote private open space.

The N.V.A.P. supports the preservation and retention of agricultural property and recommends several tools for preferential taxation of agricultural property. (page 18). These policies direct the County and City to promote small-scale agriculture and the retention of Open Space in the valley. The Plan also directs the preparation of an “Acequia Multiple Use Study” to direct the retention of access to ditches for Open Space and irrigation purposes. Ditch use relates directly to potential trail connections and networks for County Open Space properties in the South and North Valleys.

The N.V.A.P. encourages enhanced access to the Rio Grande Valley State Park through implementation of a regional network of trails, which links major Open Space in the City and County (page 107). Right-of-way in ditches and drains can play an important role in transporting residents to open space areas, avoiding the need for multiple parking lots. County Open Space can mirror this policy by concentrating

parking lots in high use areas while minimizing parking lot space in other open space areas.

e) Southwest Area Plan (Rank II)

The Bernalillo County Commission and Albuquerque City Council adopted the Southwest Area Plan (S.W.A.P.) in 2001. The plan area covers 115 square miles bounded by Central Avenue & Interstate 40 (north), the Rio Puerco (west), and Isleta Pueblo (south). Interstate 25 south of Woodward Road and the Rio Grande north of Woodward are its eastern boundaries. All existing and future South Valley Open Space properties, parks, and community complexes are governed by the S.W.A.P. The S.W.A.P. uses a comprehensive approach to emphasize physical planning, and the connections between land use, transportation, natural resources, environmental protection, agricultural preservation, and economic development.

Goals

The S.W.A.P. articulates residents' values regarding the natural environment and rural community, which relate to Open Space. The goal is to maintain the rural quality and character of the Southwest Mesa and the South Valley area and create historic villages and plazas, and viable agricultural areas. The plan also includes goals that relate to transportation, the built environment, economic development and other areas.

The plan recognizes County ownership of the Pajarito, Durand and Hubbell properties. The plan recommends continued collaboration with the City Open Space Division for the planning and management of these properties and future Open Space acquisitions. The plan also recommends future acquisition of the Playa Lakes and the Rio Puerco Escarpment.

Policies and Recommendations

S.W.A.P. policies on Open Space support acquisition of all lands designated as proposed Major Public Open Space in previous Bernalillo County and Albuquerque

plans. Acquisition of open space may be pursued by the County, City, or other agencies. The policy outlines acquisition location and criteria. Policy actions also include creating and using a system of density transfer of development rights, and purchase of development rights for preservation of Open Space areas. The actions call for surveys to determine the exact boundaries of the designated Major Public Open Space area for the Eastern Ceja, and the Western Ceja. The actions also include the creation of a trail network with acequias and drains. Collaboration with the M.R.G.C.D. to identify abandoned canals and laterals for future open space designation is recommended. Lastly, the actions address the need to create a schedule and funding process to create recreational trails and small nodal scenic overlook parks within open space areas.

f) East Mountain Area Plan (Rank II)

Bernalillo County adopted the East Mountain Area Plan (E.M.A.P.) in 1992. The E.M.A.P. provided significant direction for future County open space acquisition and management that resulted in the 1998 and 2000 Open Space mill levies. All East Mountain Open Space properties, parks, and community complexes fall under the E.M.A.P.

Open Space Goals

The E.M.A.P. goal for Open Space is to create a network of open spaces for diverse purposes, and support the acquisition of Major Public Open Space by Bernalillo County. Objectives encourage the County to create a system of neighborhood parks, trails, and community natural open areas, which connect through an "Open Space Network". This network should include arroyos. Controlling erosion and maintaining arroyos in their natural state, to the extent possible, must be considered.

The objectives also contain a set of criteria for design and development of parks and open areas (E.M.A.P. page 17). The E.M.A.P. requires Bernalillo County to prepare additional plans for implementation of policies outlined in the E.M.A.P. (page 83). In this section, it

is recommended that Bernalillo County prepare and adopt an overall Natural Resources Plan for the East Mountain Area. This plan would include areas targeted for acquisition and recreational resources for Open Space and trail development.

Acquisition Recommendations & Status

The E.M.A.P. recommends that the County acquire several pieces of private property for public Open Space and watershed preservation. These properties are listed below, with the status *italicized* in parenthesis.

- ◆ Tres Pistolas Area north of Carnuel (*acquired in 1996 with federal, City, and County funds*)
- ◆ Lands along former Highway 217, valley of Arroyo de Yrisarri (*no properties have been nominated*)
- ◆ Lands west of Gutierrez Canyon Road (*on County acquisition list*)
- ◆ Tijeras Canyon, between eastern limit of Carnuel and western limit of Tijeras Village (*no properties have been nominated*)
- ◆ Tijeras Arroyo from its source to the Albuquerque city limits (*status unknown*)
- ◆ Cedro Canyon flanked by Hwy 337 (*no properties have been nominated*)
- ◆ Valley of Juan Tomas Arroyo (*no properties have been nominated*)
- ◆ Sabino Canyon (*acquired in 2000*)
- ◆ Open space and wooded lands fronting Hwy 337 near junction with Hwy 217, and alongside Hwy 337 south to the Chilili Grant boundary (*no properties have been nominated*)
- ◆ North and west sides of escarpment in Rincon Loop (*to be evaluated in fiscal year 2003*)

E.M.A.P. Policies and Recommendations

This section describes policies that relate to the management, planning and acquisition of Bernalillo County Open Space properties (page 74). Policies encourage cooperation and joint projects between the National Forest Service, Village of Tijeras and the County, collaboration with area residents, and changes in development patterns. These policies encourage new subdivisions to provide trail

The recommendation for a Natural Resources Plan was identified as a means to select Open Space in the East Mountains for acquisition. A County-wide Natural Resources Plan is not being prepared because separate resource plans for specific properties are underway as part of the East Mountain Open Space Planning effort.

connections to adjacent public lands, and use clustered housing to preserve sensitive areas and key visual resources. Policies also give Bernalillo County direction to work with area residents to develop a program for development and installation of interpretive signage.

E.M.A.P. policies also include a section on Historic and Archeological Sites (page 79), which could impact Carlito Springs, Sabino Canyon, and Ojito de San Antonio properties. These policies promote the preservation of historic structures through adaptive reuse for public and community uses. The policies suggest application to the State Historic Preservation Division for area survey funds, and providing support for practical preservation programs that will benefit East Mountain area residents and the properties.

g) Trails & Bikeways Facility Plan (Rank II)

The Bernalillo County Commission and Albuquerque City Council adopted the Trails and Bikeways Facility Plan in 1993 and map amendments in 1996. This Plan provides guidance for trail planning, design and management, and identifies future primary and secondary trails in most of Bernalillo County, except for the West Mesa and East Mountains. Links and improvements have steadily been developed thanks to a ¼ cent transportation tax approved by voters in the mid-1990s and administered by the City of Albuquerque.

This envisioned network is the “T” in the P.O.S.T. framework to connect public institutions, employment and commercial areas, and neighborhoods. Besides recreation, the plan advocates trail network development for home/work commuting as a way to reduce single-occupancy vehicle usage.

All trails built by Bernalillo County are network links identified in this plan. Future trail planning by Bernalillo County Public Works (BCPW) and BCPR will continue to use the Trails and Bikeways Facility Plan as its guide for trail locations in the unincorporated

North and South Valley as well as for specific design standards and specifications.

Policies and Recommendations

Plan policies that affect parks and Open Space include connection with neighborhoods, the creation of recreational loops, and distribution of trail improvements on a city-wide basis. The Plan's Implementation section identifies the City Open Space Division for the development and maintenance of trails in Open Space and along the major public open space arroyos. Other agencies such as Albuquerque Metropolitan Arroyo Flood Control Authority (AMAFCA), MRGCD, State Highway and Transportation Department, City Public Works, City Parks and Recreation, BCPW, and BCPR also are involved in implementation. Appointed committees such as the Greater Albuquerque Recreational Trails Committee (GARTC) and the Greater Albuquerque Bicycle Advisory Committee (GABAC) are active citizen groups working on behalf of trail planning, network development, education, and maintenance.

The Plan includes a Proposed Trails Map that identifies potential connections to County Parks and Open Space. These potential connections are detailed in Chapter III Trails Planning/Programming.

h) Facility Plan for Arroyos (Rank II)

The Bernalillo County Commission and Albuquerque City Council adopted the Facility Plan for Arroyos in 1986. This plan addresses Comprehensive Plan goals for the creation of a multi-purpose trail and Open Space network along arroyos. The Plan identifies a number of arroyos for further study and ranks arroyos for suitability of trail and linkage development. Open Space and park facilities potentially affected by the Facility Plan for Arroyos includes the undeveloped Judge Henry Coors property (Pajarito Arroyo), Big Sky Hang Gliding Park (South La Cueva Arroyo), Vista Sandia Equestrian Park (South Domingo Baca Arroyo), or potential Open Space in North Albuquerque Acres (Bear Canyon, South Domingo, or La Cueva Arroyos).

Several existing or future trails also could be affected by design requirements articulated in this facility plan.

Goals and Issues

The Facility Plan for Arroyos draws from the Open Space component of the Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan. The goal that guides arroyo planning is the alignment of public Open Space and recreational trails along drainage facilities. The Facility Plan for Arroyos encourages multiple use of arroyos and establishes guidelines and procedures to create conditions for multiple uses of arroyos. These goals apply specifically to County parks and Open Space properties where identified arroyos and future property acquisitions abut or cross arroyos.

4. Water Plans, Policies & Projects

a) Ground-Water Protection Policy & Action Plan

The Bernalillo County Commission and Albuquerque City Council adopted the Ground-Water Protection Policy & Action Plan (G.P.P.A.P.) in 1993 and 1994, respectively. The GPPAP initiated a broad effort to protect our precious ground water supplies from contamination. All Open Space and park facilities with wells and/or septic tanks are affected by the G.P.P.A.P.

The goals of the G.P.P.A.P. are to 1) protect the ground water resource, 2) find and clean up the contaminated ground water, and 3) promote the coordinated protection and prudent use of the ground water resource throughout the region.

b) Water Resources Management Strategy

Following adoption of the G.P.P.A.P., the City Public Works Department developed the Albuquerque Water Resources Management Strategy (W.R.M.S.) in 1997. The WRMS identified what is required to shift from reliance on ground water alone and move toward a sustainable supply by diversifying water sources to

BCPR facilities get water from a variety of sources:

- ◆ **on-site wells**
- ◆ **City of Albuquerque**
- ◆ **New Mexico Utilities Inc.**
- ◆ **Entranosa**
- ◆ **Sandia Utilities**
- ◆ **Village of Tijeras**

include ground water, surface water, and recycled water from industry and treated wastewater. One of the key components is the City's use of approximately 48,000 acre feet of San Juan-Chama water that is diverted into the Rio Grande via the Azotea tunnel near Abiquiu.

The W.R.M.S. involves many infrastructure investments by the City of Albuquerque that will affect some Open Space and park facilities. The City of Albuquerque's North I-25 Nonpotable Surface Water Reclamation Project, for example, proposes to take some untreated San Juan-Chama river water near the Alameda Bridge and pipe it east to mix it with high-quality industrial waste water from the semiconductor industries in the North I-25 corridor. This reclaimed water will be used to irrigate over 1,000 acres of large turf areas in this part of the City and County. County staff has worked with City Public Works staff since the following County facilities will be affected by, and ultimately benefit from, this project by receiving non-potable water for irrigation:

- ◆ Alameda Blvd. trail landscaping
- ◆ Raymond G. Sanchez Community Complex
- ◆ Alameda Soccer Fields
- ◆ Bachechi Open Space
- ◆ Alameda Little League

Further south, City Public Works also is working on the infrastructure design for treated effluent from the Southside Wastewater Reclamation Plant on South 2nd Street SW. This plan intends to pump treated effluent east on Rio Bravo to irrigate large turf areas such as the UNM South Golf Course, Albuquerque International Sunport, and other City parks along the Gibson corridor. County facilities affected by and benefiting from this project include the Mesa del Sol Regional Recreation Complex, Journal Pavilion, and Ambassador Edward L. Romero Park (U).

One of the key W.R.M.S. policies that may impact the development of new park facilities in Bernalillo County is Policy D.1:

Rule of thumb: Turf consumes 1 million gallons of water per acre per year.

To the extent practical, eliminate the use of high-quality water from the deep aquifer for irrigation of parks, golf course, and other large turf applications. Use reclaimed wastewater, surface water, and shallow ground water for irrigation and non-potable uses. Use of shallow ground water will be augmented with enhanced recharge as necessary to protect shallow ground water levels.

Irrigation using wells cannot exceed one acre and cannot use more than 3 acre feet/year if water rights are not successfully transferred to that well.

This policy is potentially problematic for Bernalillo County because water rights will be needed for new and/or existing wells at facilities where more than three-acre feet of water are needed for irrigation. Existing County ownership of water rights and future acquisition or declaration of water rights is addressed in the discussion below on a 40-Year Water Rights Plan. Well drilling and permits are also expected to be under greater regulatory scrutiny by the Office of the State Engineer, which potentially hampers the County's ability to drill wells for irrigating recreational facilities. Wells to irrigate County properties also require more maintenance by Parks and Recreation Department crews than municipal water provided by the City of Albuquerque.

c) NPDES Stormwater Permit

The National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) regulations are a part of the Clean Water Act, a statute implemented and enforced by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) intended to protect our water quality. NPDES regulations regarding storm water are designed to prevent pollutants from entering stormwater discharge. In order for Bernalillo County (the County) to comply with these regulations, the County must implement a Storm Water Quality Management Plan (SWQMP) that addresses the following six Minimum Control Measures:

- ◆ Public Education/Outreach;
- ◆ Public Participation/Involvement;
- ◆ Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination;

- ◆ Construction Site Stormwater Runoff;
- ◆ Post Construction Stormwater Management in New Development/Redevelopment; and
- ◆ Pollution Prevention/Good Housekeeping.

In order to implement these Minimum Control Measures, the County has developed Best Management Practices (BMPs) in its SWQMP that specifically address each Minimum Control Measure and a schedule for implementing each practice. Since EPA does not provide funding for this program, the County must use existing resources to implement the Plan. With these restraints in mind, the BMPs developed for the County seek to build upon current programs, as well as developing public education and information materials regarding stormwater runoff and stormwater quality.

Many of these Best Management Practices are beyond the areas of responsibility of Bernalillo County Parks and Recreation Department. Other Best Management Practices, however, are being implemented by BCPR in all phases of project development, from initial facility design to continual facility maintenance.

d) Valley Utilities Project

In an effort to improve longstanding concerns about septic systems and water quality in the Valley area, BCPW is undertaking the Valley Utilities Project. This project will provide water and sewer to the developed but unserved areas of the North and South Valley. The Valley Utilities Project has initiated construction of several major sewer projects and has also initiated the preliminary design and environmental clearance process for the South Valley Water System Expansion. Federal funds made available to date are fully committed on these existing projects:

Pajarito Sewer Project

The Pajarito Sewer Project will extend sewer service to approximately 770 homes in the Southwest Valley. The project is generally located north of Pajarito Road SW and west of the Los Padillas Drain.

Polk Area 4 and 5 Sewer Project

This sewer extension project is located in the South Valley, immediately south of Pajarito Road SW, north of Luchetti Road SW, west of Coors Blvd. SW, and east of the Rio Grande.

Area D and E Sewer Project

The project is bounded on the west by the Rio Grande, on the south by El Pueblo Road NW, on the east by 4th Street NW, and on the north by Sandia Pueblo.

Coors 8, 9 and 10 Sewer Project

This project is located south of Raymac Road and west of Coors Blvd. SW in the South Valley. The project design should be finished in the Summer of 2003. When completed, the project will serve 600 lots.

South Valley Water System Expansion

The South Valley Water System Expansion is a component of the Valley Utility Project. The project area is generally bounded by Rio Bravo Blvd. on the north, Isleta Pueblo on the south, future Unser Blvd. alignment on the west, and the Rio Grande on the east. The water system expansion is in the preliminary design stage. The project proposed by the County would provide a suburban level of service in the project area. Suburban level of service provides water for domestic indoor use, residential fire hydrants, and greater protection capability in commercial areas.

e) 40-Year Water Plan

This plan was initiated to protect the County's existing water rights and to identify acquisition needs of water rights for future development of County facilities. State law allows county governments to protect water rights that will be put to beneficial uses over a 40-year planning period, even if the local government does not operate a water utility.

Bernalillo County owns and/or manages over 150 properties and/or facilities. Of these, 91 consume water for indoor domestic uses and/or for outdoor irrigation uses. County facilities rely on water from one or more of seven water providers that include County owned wells, the City of Albuquerque, New Mexico Utilities, Sandia Utilities, Tranquilo Pines Coop, Village of Tijeras, and Entramosa.

It is estimated that these 91 County facilities use approximately 1.3 million gallons of water per day, or 3.9 acre-feet per day, in 2002. These estimates are based on national standards of water use characteristics by facility-type, size, number of employees and visitors, and other variables. A spot-check of 12 billing records for a 12-month period at County facilities was also used to prepare this estimate. Park and recreation facilities consume approximately 75% of this water, public safety facilities consume approximately 23.4%, while other County administrative facilities consume approximately 1.6%.

The 40-Year Water Plan highlights the need to pursue acquisition of approximately 400 acre-feet of water – approximately 250 acre-feet for future facilities or existing facilities with water leases, and another 150 acre-feet to accommodate new storm-water runoff requirements mandated by the Environmental Protection Agency. Water rights declarations for approximately 25 properties will be filed as part of submitting the 40-Year Plan to the Office of the State Engineer. The maximum total that could be obtained from successful transfers that result from these filings is 261 acre-feet. Transfers are subject to public notification, potential protests, a hearing before the Office of the State Engineer, and generally cannot occur between underground water basins.

The plan concludes that conservation will be important toward meeting future needs. It is estimated that between 15- 30% of water used can be saved with thorough audits of all County facilities as a basis for a conservation strategy. This amount

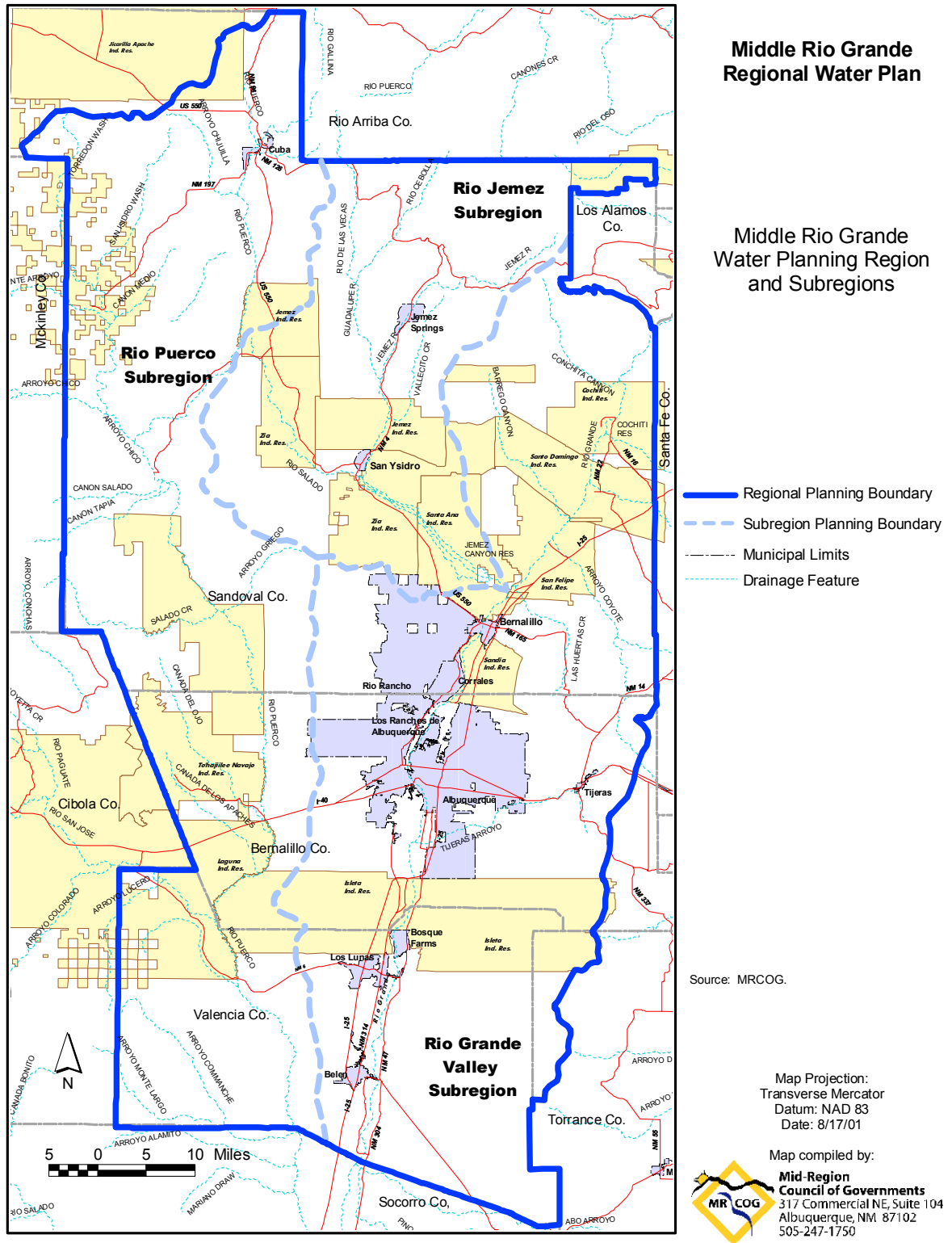
could translate into saving between \$150,000 - \$300,000 per year in water expenses. The Environmental Health Services Gross Receipts Tax Committee has budgeted some funds for this water conservation effort, which is considered the second phase of the 40-Year Water Plan. These water planning efforts help prepare Bernalillo County for managing water resources of the newly created Albuquerque-Bernalillo County Water Authority created by the 2003 Legislature.

f) Middle Rio Grande Regional Water Plan

The Mid-Region Council of Governments (MRCOG) and the Middle Rio Grande Water Assembly (Assembly) are preparing a regional water plan for the Middle Rio Grande Basin (Map II-1). The Assembly is a grass-roots non-profit organization partnered with MRCOG under a Memorandum of Understanding to jointly develop the plan. One major responsibility of the Assembly is to ensure public participation in this planning effort. A regionally-based water planning process will allow diverse stakeholder groups within the region to formulate a water plan, thereby ensuring that the water needs of all citizens are considered. The MRCOG, through its Middle Rio Grande Water Resources Board, provides an organizational structure comprised of entities with the authority for adopting and coordinating the implementation of water management plans.

The ground water, or aquifer, that supplies Bernalillo County residents extends beyond the jurisdictional boundaries of the County. According to the City of Albuquerque, depletion of the aquifer is occurring. Replenishment of the aquifer through precipitation and recharge is not keeping up with pumping demands, hence the aquifer is being "mined". If corrective action is not taken, water planners estimate that we may experience increased costs to extract the water, increased salinity in the water, land subsidence and an inability to meet the Rio Grande Compact obligations. Water use projections indicate that regional water resources will continue to be depleted

Map II-1 Middle Rio Grande Regional Water Plan



**Middle Rio Grande
Regional Water Plan
Management
Alternatives would
affect the operations
and facilities of the
Bernalillo County Parks
and Recreation
Department by
providing information
and options to better
manage the resource.**

unless actions are taken to conserve and use water more efficiently.

The regional water plan will answer five essential questions:

1. What is the region's available water supply?
2. What is the region's current and future water demand?
3. How will the region balance demand with supply?
4. Do the alternatives reflect the region's values?
5. What strategies will enable us to make the best alternatives become reality?

This ambitious and necessary planning effort has recently completed studies on regional water supply and consumer demand. An interim Mission and Goals for the future of water in the Middle Rio Grande region have been formulated, while water management actions have been suggested. The mission of the plan is to *balance use with renewable supply*. A total of 44 feasible water management alternatives are now being analyzed for technical/financial, social/cultural, economic, physical/hydrological/environmental, and legal implications.

During September 2002, the Assembly held six meetings to obtain an initial preference of these candidate alternatives from the public. In January 2003, there was a regional forum where the analyses were publicized, and the public was asked to rank their preferences with this knowledge. Thereafter, the public will be engaged in scenario building, selecting the preferred scenario, and then commenting on the draft and final plan.

This plan should be finished in late 2003 and will strive to:

- ◆ reflect the reality of water supply limits

- ◆ incorporate a common vision for balancing a diversity of water uses based on the values of the region's citizens;
- ◆ comply with federal and state statutes;
- ◆ guide stakeholder decision making;
- ◆ initiate a continuing and measurable water planning process; and
- ◆ create a viable process for plan implementation.

(Portions of this section are reprinted from MRCOG 2002 Annual Report and www.WaterAssembly.org)

5. Ordinances

There are five ordinances that affect BCPR operations. Most of these ordinances were created in the 1980s or early 1990s and were included in re-codifying the entire Bernalillo County Code in 2001. A handful need to be revised or repealed. An ordinance check by BCPR staff concludes that many of the existing ordinances should be consolidated into a single ordinance for parks and into a new ordinance for Open Space. In general, ordinance revisions need to address facility rentals, facility operations, fee structures, special events, provisions for special activity areas, and penalties for violations. This recommendation is set forth in Chapter V and will be a follow-up implementation task after adoption of this Master Plan.

The most important ordinances affecting BCPR are the Impact Fee Ordinance, Trails and Bikeways Set-Aside Ordinance, Public Art Ordinance, Open Space Management Ordinance, and Park and Recreational Facility Rules Ordinance. They are summarized in the following pages. The remaining ordinances affecting BCPR to a lesser extent are summarized in Table II-4 on page 49.

a) **Impact Fee Ordinance (Chapter 46)**

Counties in New Mexico are authorized to impose impact fees under the Development Fees Act of 1993. On June 30, 1996, Bernalillo County enacted the Impact Fees Ordinance, which replaced the Parkland

County IFCIP

vs.

State Infrastructure CIP

The IFCIP is separate from, but related to, the local infrastructure capital improvement plan that is submitted to the State each year. The County IFCIPs and the Infrastructure CIP often contain the same projects, but the County IFCIP only identifies those projects that can use impact fees. The Infrastructure CIP contains projects using federal, state, and local funds.

Dedication Ordinance. The Impact Fees Ordinance requires developers to “bear an amount not to exceed its proportionate share of the costs related to parks, open space, Fire\EMS, roadways, and drainage facilities that are rationally related to such new development in accordance with applicable law.” (Sec 46-1).

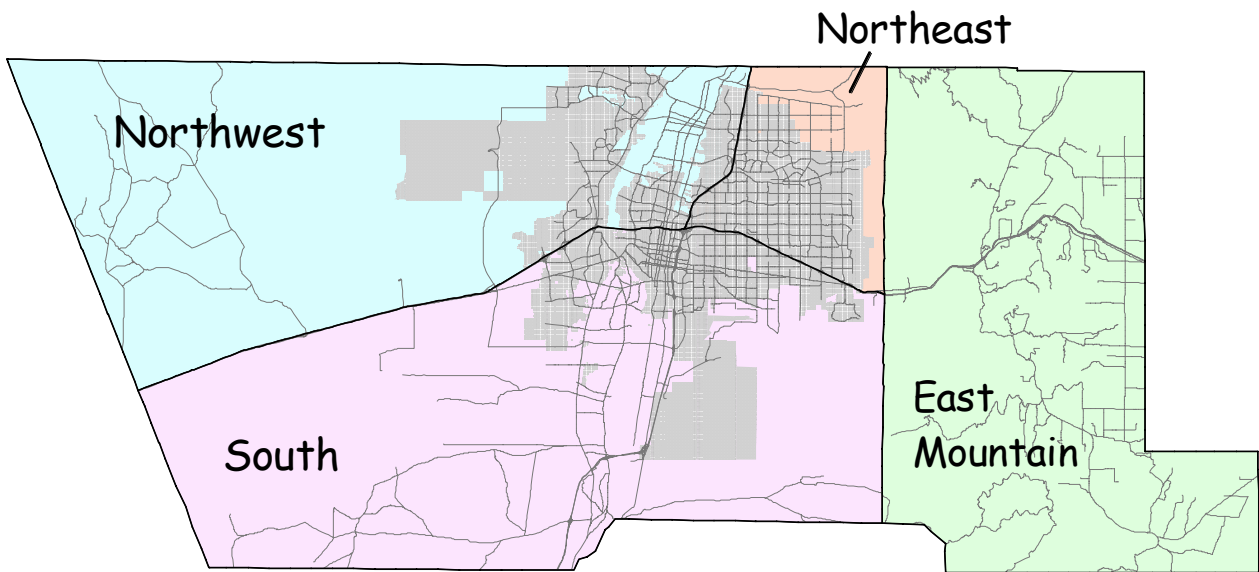
Impact fees can be spent on capital projects and planning that respond to facility demand caused by housing and population growth. Purchase of land, development to increase the capacity of facilities (not for general improvement), updates of the Impact Fee Capital Improvement Plan (IFCIP), project planning and design and engineering, and construction are eligible impact fee expenditures. Impact fees cannot be used for maintenance or operating costs nor can they be used for community centers, libraries, and schools as per the Development Fees Act of 1993. Gymnasiums, however, are specifically exempted from the restrictive clause on community centers. Specific projects or general projects identified in the department’s master plan, the IFCIP, or on any Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) item are eligible for funding.

Impact Fee Service Areas

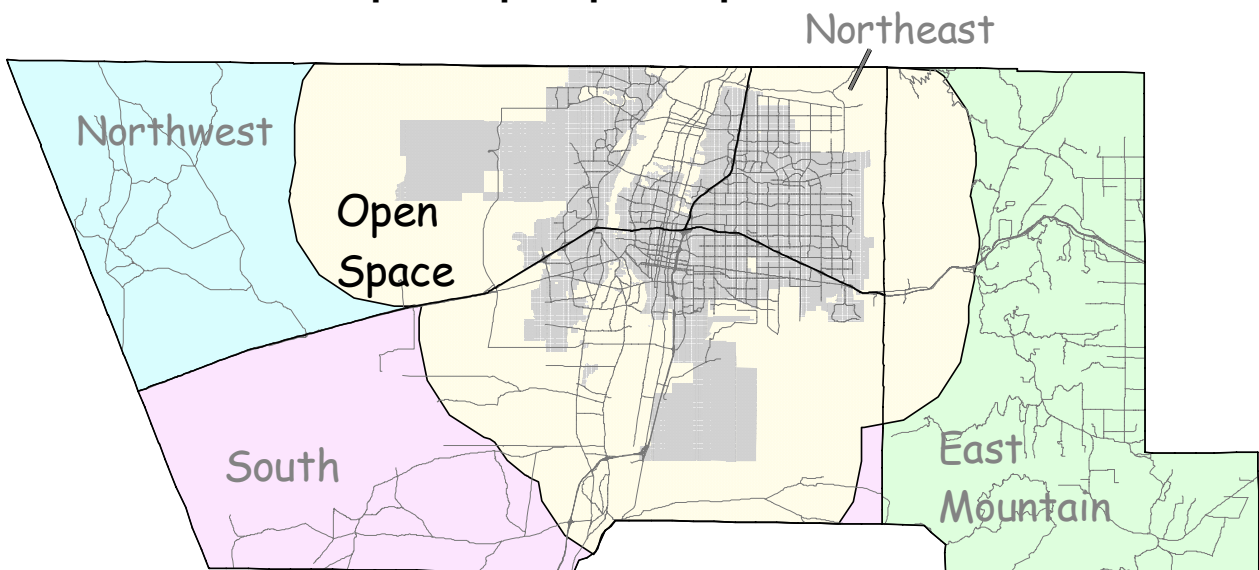
Impact fees must be spent within the service area from which the fees were collected. The four park impact fee service areas are shown in Map II-2 and include East Mountain, Northeast, Northwest, and South. A fifth impact fee service area will need to be created for Quail Ranch if it develops in Bernalillo County, as required in the development agreement signed between Bernalillo County and the developer in 1999. An annexation request to the City of Rio Rancho was approved in June 2003.

Only one Open Space Impact Fee Service Area exists; it is shown in Map II-3. All of the area outside the limits of any incorporated municipality in Bernalillo County is included, except beyond the five-mile extraterritorial jurisdiction. The Development Fees Act allows a single County-wide impact fee service area.

Map II-2 Park Impact Fee Service Areas



Map II-3 Open Space Impact Fee Service Area



The Bernalillo County Commission amended the Ordinance in June 2002 to address economic development issues relative to the physical scale and proportional impact of new development and smaller upgrades of existing commercial and industrial facilities. The Commission also amended the amount assessed and collected by the County for parks and Open Space for each new single family and multi-family unit, as presented in Tables II-2 and II-3.

Park Impact Fees increased on paper from \$671 to \$763 per single-family dwelling unit and from \$423 to \$481 per multi-family unit. This increase represents the construction costs of providing basic amenities at parks from the time of original ordinance adoption in 1996 to preparation of the update in 2002. However, the collection rate is set at 40% so the net amount collected per dwelling unit has decreased. For example, a new single-family house is assessed a park impact fee of $\$763 * 40\% = \305.20 . The Open Space Impact Fee was reduced from \$434 to \$222 per single-family unit and from \$273 to \$179 per multi-family unit.

The distinction between assessed amounts versus collected amounts is important. Assessed amounts reflect that which is necessary to provide a basic level of service as calculated and outlined in the IFCIP. Collection amounts can be different than assessed amounts. Both are policy decisions made by the Bernalillo County Commission.

The net result of these amendments is that approximately 40% less per new unit (\$305 vs. \$503) built will be collected and available to BCPR. While impact fees alone rarely are enough to fund projects, they are crucial sources of revenue that augment legislative and/or general obligation bond funding. That is, construction of some facilities would not have been possible without impact fees because BCPR would not have had enough money to award the bid and execute a contract. The reduction in collected park impact fees means that for each service area, balances will not accumulate as quickly and less will be available to supplement non-impact fee funding.

Recent projects including Vista Sandia Equestrian Park, Big Sky Hang Gliding Park, Mountain View Gymnasium, were partially funded through impact fees.

Table II-2 Park & Open Space Impact Fee Assessed Amounts

Land Use Category and Year	Impact Fee Service Areas and Amounts					
	East Mountain	Northeast	Northwest	South	Quail Ranch	Open Space
Single-family* dwelling unit (1996-2001)	\$671	\$671	\$671	\$671	N/A	\$434
Single-family* dwelling unit (mid 2002 – present)	\$763	\$763	\$763	\$763	\$763	\$222
Multi-family dwelling unit (1996-2001)	\$423	\$423	\$423	\$423	N/A	\$273
Multi-family dwelling unit (mid 2002 – present)	\$481	\$481	\$481	\$481	\$481	\$179

Table II-3 Park & Open Space Impact Fee Collected Amounts

Land Use Category and Year	Impact Fee Service Areas and Amounts					
	East Mountain	Northeast	Northwest	South	Quail Ranch	Open Space
Single-family* dwelling unit (1996-2001)	\$503	\$503	\$503	\$503	N/A	\$130
Single-family* dwelling unit (mid 2002 – present)	\$305	\$305	\$305	\$305	\$305	\$89
Multi-family dwelling unit (1996-2001)	\$317	\$317	\$317	\$317	N/A	\$82
Multi-family dwelling unit (2002 – present)	\$192	\$192	\$192	\$192	\$192	\$71

*Includes mobile homes

Impact Fees Capital Improvement Plan

The Commission also adopted the Impact Fees Capital Improvement Plan (IFCIP) for Parks and Open Space, Fire\EMS, roadways, and drainage facilities. IFCIPs are required by the Development Fees Act. Future updates are required every five years.

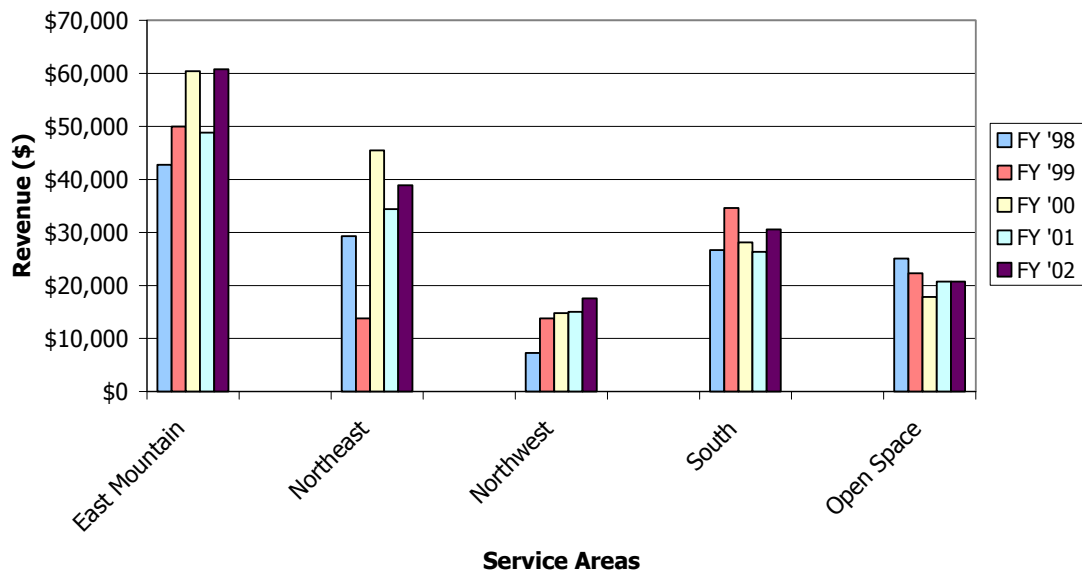
IFCIPs require a sequential set of calculations that factor the following variables:

- ◆ Acreage of existing facilities
- ◆ Unit costs of facilities, including land and improvements
- ◆ Replacement costs of facilities, including land and improvements
- ◆ Net local cost of park facilities as a percent of total cost
- ◆ Existing net cost per capita
- ◆ Population growth-related park costs
- ◆ Park demand and cost schedule
- ◆ Alternative level of service scenarios
- ◆ Outstanding park debt

Impact Fee Revenues

Figure II-1 shows the revenues collected from impact fees from 1998-2002 by Park and Open Space Service Areas.

Figure II-1 Impact Fee Revenues (1998-2002)



**b) Trails & Bikeways Set Aside
Ordinance (Chapter 2, Article IV)**

The County Commission enacted this ordinance in 1994 to establish funding for trail design and development in the unincorporated areas. The ordinance sets aside 5% of the total program funding for road and drainage projects in the County's biannual Capital Improvement Program (CIP), which is financed through issuance of General Obligation Bonds. Currently administered by the BCPW Division, the Division Director recommends funding on a per project basis to the Board of County Commissioners.

Trail projects that have been constructed with 5% set side funds include:

- ◆ Atrisco Riverside Drain Trail (design only)
- ◆ South Diversion Trail
- ◆ Tijeras Arroyo Trail
- ◆ Rio Grande/Alameda Trailhead
- ◆ Paseo del Norte Trail

Starting in 2001, BCPR and BCPW established a new level of coordination on trail planning, development, and maintenance. A combined trail development priority list has been prepared to guide spending under this ordinance. This list is presented in the Trails section in Chapter III.

BCPR sees no reason to amend this ordinance at this time.

**c) Art in Bernalillo County Public
Places (Chapter 18, Article II)**

The intent of this ordinance is to promote and encourage public awareness of the arts and cultural properties and to integrate art into Bernalillo County facilities and structures. Administered by an appointed Arts Board, one percent of all voter-approved, General Obligation Bond funded CIP projects is set aside for public art. State legislative appropriations greater than recreational projects. Open Space funds are exempt from the ordinance, however, public art projects may be located at Open

Space sites. BCPR facilities benefiting from public art includes many of the community centers, such as West Side Community Center, Raymond G. Sanchez Community Center, Vista Grande Community Center, and Los Vecinos Community Center. Each site exhibits a variety of works from artist designed marquees and outdoor bronze sculptures to indoor stone installations and tapestries. Future BCPR artwork projects will be designed for and installed at the Mesa del Sol Regional Recreation Complex, Atrisco Little League, Park and Open Space (Sunset Rd.), Whispering Pines Senior Meal Site future Los Padillas Swimming Pool and the historic Hubbell House.

BCPR sees no reason to amend this ordinance at this time. \$100,000 also set aside 1% for public art. The 1% from the CIP and state grants can be combined to enhance jointly funded

**d) Open Space Management
Ordinance (Chapter 58, Article III)**

The County Commission adopted this ordinance in 1988 before the County Open Space Program was created. This ordinance was intended to address management, motorized vehicle access, appropriate uses, enforcement, and penalties on Open Space properties in the unincorporated areas of Bernalillo County. The ordinance also affirmed City assistance to protect open spaces in the unincorporated area, and for the City to implement a plan for Major Public Open Space. City Open Space completed the MPOS Facility Plan in 1998 and the County Commission adopted it in 1999.

This ordinance will need to be repealed and replaced with a new ordinance that reflects existing conditions and proposed regulations of current and future properties of the new County Open Space program.

**e) Park & Recreation Facility Rules
Ordinance (Chapter 58, Article II)**

The first ordinance outlining basic park regulations was No. 251 was adopted in 1974. It defined parks, prohibited vandalism and removal of natural resources, guided erection of structures in parks, and generally regulated hours of operation, trash, traffic, firearms, vending, advertising, tree climbing, hunting, and “dangerous amusements”. This ordinance was amended in 1977 to restrict skateboarding at parks to designated areas and to better define special events. The 1979 amendment included minor text revisions.

The 1984 amendment included a package of changes addressing disfigurement and removal of properties and equipment, prohibiting glass containers, and allowing alcohol as long as a special picnic license is obtained from the Alcohol Beverage Control Department of the State of NM and special permission is granted from BCPR. This amendment was declared an emergency ordinance on the grounds of urgent public need and was effective upon its publication and passage.

BCPR recommends Chapter 58, Article II be thoroughly re-examined in light of new facilities added to the BCPR inventory, new issues and problems that have surfaced in recent years, and development of special activities at designated facilities.

Table II-4 Ancillary Ordinances Affecting BCPR

Ordinance Section	Ordinance Title	Summary	Future Action
Chapter 62, Article III	Neighborhood Notification	Notify registered neighborhood associations about upcoming special use permits and zone changes	No action necessary
Chapter 2, Article V	Design Services Selection	Select architectural and engineering consultants hired for design work	No action necessary
Chapter 42, Article IV	Wastewater Systems	All park and recreation facilities using on-site wastewater systems must comply	Coordinate with BCEH

B. City-County Government Unification

Senate Joint Resolution 26 and House Joint Resolution 25 in 1999 proposed a Constitutional amendment pertaining only to Bernalillo County. The amendment, approved by voters in the 2000 General Election, enables Bernalillo County to become a “home rule” or urban county and/or enables creation of a unified urban government for Albuquerque and Bernalillo County.

The Constitutional amendment provided for two separate votes: a local Countywide vote on the charter for the County, and a local vote on the charter for a unified government. With the latter, the incorporated municipalities of Tijeras and Los Ranchos de Albuquerque can determine whether they choose to become a part of the unified new government.

The Constitutional amendment process provided for at least two separate charter commissions responsible for developing proposed charters and attendant details. The first urban charter commission developed the proposed Urban County Charter. A special election was held on December 4, 2001 in which residents of Bernalillo County rejected the Urban County Charter by a vote 23.6% for and 76.4% against.

The second urban charter commission will develop the single urban government charter that, if approved by voters, will result in a unified form of government. Both City and County governments appointed members to the commission to draft a proposed unification charter for a new unified government pursuant to Article 10, Section 11 of the amended Constitution of the State of New Mexico. This charter will be presented to the eligible voters of Bernalillo County in November 2003.

The second urban charter commission held its first public forum on January 11, 2003. There are six public forums planned for presenting information and receiving input.

Establishment of, and transition to, a single county urban government was intended to be enhanced by the three-step process and a timeline set forth in the Constitutional Amendment. However, the amendment also intended that failure of the first charter for the urban county not preclude development of a subsequent unified government charter.

A charter for unified government in Bernalillo County would establish home-rule government and increase flexibility in determining the organization, finances, and functions in the unincorporated area. In terms of organization, a unified city and county government might have an appointed chief administrative officer, or an elected executive, or both. Home rule authority gives counties the latitude to alter the size of the legislative body. It also gives the latitude to hire county officers by merit or maintain their elective status. The Charter would allow counties greater flexibility in the issuance of general obligation bonds and the ability to directly apply for and accept federal grant program funds.

BCPR may benefit from an urban county charter or unified city county government since a new procurement code would be written, one that is more flexible and “user-friendly”, particularly when design and construction services are needed. Contracts could be structured based on criteria developed locally, rather than by state standards that are not conducive to tailoring contracts to unique circumstances that BCPR encounters. These circumstances include:

- ◆ Phasing projects (including design) because of funding constraints,
- ◆ Design-build arrangements with architects, engineers, and user groups;
- ◆ Agreements and/or partnerships with volunteer organizations to assist in the management of Open Space properties

C. Demographics

1. Population

Bernalillo County accounts for over 30% of New Mexico's population and is expected to remain the most populous county in New Mexico for the next 20 years (source: New Mexico Population Projections, Bureau of Business & Economic Research). In 1940, the population was approximately 63,000. Then, through the 1950's the County experienced rapid growth during the post-war period and by 1960, the population reached 262,000. From 1960 to 2000 the population increased by approximately 295,000. The total population in Bernalillo County in 2000 was 556,678, and of that 94,385 lived within the unincorporated areas (source: U. S. Census Bureau).

Nearly 17% of the County residents live within the unincorporated areas. The population data for unincorporated Bernalillo County does not include Kirtland Airforce Base, Pueblo Lands, or the Villages of Los Ranchos, Corrales and Tijeras.

Each area of the County is distinct, which is reflected in the diverse population, natural features and development patterns. Some of the unincorporated areas have suburban densities, such as Paradise Hills. Other areas are semi-urban/quasi-rural such as some sections of the North and South Valley and the far Northeast area. Areas that are mostly rural include the East Mountains and some sections of the far South Valley.

Currently, much of the new growth within unincorporated Bernalillo County is occurring in the Northeast, which experienced a 75% increase in population between 1990 and 2000. The East Mountains had the next largest increase of 39% followed by the South with 17%. The Northwest area experienced a slight decrease in population of 3% between 1990 and 2000. This decrease can be attributed to the annexation of developed property into the municipal limits and a decline in household

size, thereby decreasing the population count in the unincorporated area.

Table II-5 Population Growth for the Unincorporated Areas of Bernalillo County 1990–2010

Park Service Area	1990-00			2000-10	
	1990	2000	Change	2010	Change
East Mountain	12,313	17,081	39%	19,120	12%
Northeast	4,806	8,421	75%	9,263	10%
Northwest	19,943	19,329	-3%	21,126	9%
South	42,190	49,554	17%	51,791	5%
Total	79,252	94,385	19%	101,300	7%

Table II-5 indicates that the population in all Park Service Areas will continue to grow through the year 2010. MRCOG is forecasting slower growth in the East Mountains in this decade based on a slow-down in building permits in recent years. Slower growth is also forecasted for the unincorporated portion of Northeast Service Area, which is related to a combination of annexations and a declining inventory of vacant land. Since 1990, the Northwest Service area lost population, which is attributed to some major annexations. Barring more annexations, there should be solid growth in the current decade, including the initial development at Quail Ranch. The South Service Area is forecasted to have moderate growth. Much of the rapid growth in the south is occurring on land inside the municipal limits or on land that is being annexed.

The total growth forecast for all Park Service Areas is less than the growth from 1990 to 2000. This is related to the lower growth forecast for the County by the Bureau of Business and Economic Research (BBER). Bernalillo County population is forecast to grow by 7% this decade whereas it grew by 19%

during the 1990s. This forecast, combined with the expectation of a smaller percentage of the County residing in the unincorporated area and a smaller household size, results in a projection of a smaller increase in the population residing in the Park Service Areas.